

Change in vaccine recommendation for 11-12 year olds

Preteens should receive Tdap vaccine when they are 11-12 years old. The Tdap vaccine provides immunity against three diseases: Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis (whooping cough). As of July 1, 2015, Tdap will be a required vaccine to enter 7th grade or by 12 years of age, whichever comes first. In addition to preteens, anyone who has not had the Tdap vaccine should receive a dose.

Tetanus is caused by a toxin (poison) made by bacteria found in soil. These bacteria can enter the body through cuts, scratches or puncture wounds in the skin. It can cause painful muscle cramps in the jaw muscle (lockjaw) and throughout the body. As many as 1 out of 5 people who get tetanus die.

Diphtheria is not as common as tetanus but can be very dangerous. It is spread from person to person through coughing or sneezing. It can cause paralysis, heart failure and difficulty breathing or swallowing.

Pertussis or whooping cough is spread very easily through coughing or sneezing. The cough causes a person to gasp for air and have difficulty breathing. The cough can last for many weeks. In preparation for the change in immunization requirements, please see your child's health care provider for this vaccine. To learn more about Tdap vaccine, talk to your child's doctor, call 1-800-CDC-INFO or contact Rhonda Mock, RN Immunization Nurse at Davie County Health Department at 336-753-6750.